

Message Text

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44

ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 /017 W
----- 116431

R 220724Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW

TO USIA WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4493

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

UNCLAS WARSAW 2372

FOR USIA - IEE/PASS ARBA

VIENNA - RPO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, PL

SUBJECT: FRANKLIN/JEFFERSON EXHIBIT

FOLLOWING IS ENGLISH TEXT OF LOCALLY ORIGINATED RELEASE
FOR PRESS KIT. POLISH TRANSLATION WILL BE SENT
SEPARATELY TO RPO/VIENNA.

1. TITLE: POLAND AND THE GENESIS OF THE AMERICAN
REPUBLIC.

2. CONTRIBUTIONS BY THE POLISH HEROES KAZIMIERZ
PULASKI AND TADEUSZ KOSCIUSZKO TO THE AMERICAN
REVOLUTION ARE WIDELY RECOGNIZED AND VALUED. PULASKI,
FOUNDER OF THE FAMOUS PULASKI LEGION, WAS MORTALLY
WOUNDED AT THE BATTLE OF SAVANNAH, THE FIRST FOREIGNER
OF HIS RANK AND DISTINCTION TO DIE FOR THE AMERICAN
CAUSE. KOSCIUSZKO, REMEMBERED AS THE "FATHER
OF THE AMERICAN ARTILLERY", WAS ALSO A SKILLED MI-
LITARY ENGINEER WHOSE FORTIFICATIONS AT SARATOGA
AND WEST POINT HAD CONSIDERABLE INFLUENCE ON
AMERICAN SUCESS ON THE BATTLEFIELD.

3. THE ROOTS OF POLISH IDENTITY WITH THE YOUNG
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AMERICAN NATION EXTEND FARTHER BACK THAN THE

HEROISM OF KOSCIUSZKO AND PULASKI. MASS EMIGRATION OF POLES TO AMERICA IN THE 17TH AND 18TH CENTURIES NEVER APPROACHED THE DIMENSIONS OF THE ENGLISH OR OTHER NORTHERN EUROPEAN NATIONALITIES. THIS IS TO BE EXPLAINED BY THE GREATER DISTANCE SEPARATING POLAND FROM THE NEW WORLD AND THE FACT THAT THE COUNTRY WAS NOT A SEAFARING POWER. HOWEVER, THE MODEST NUMBER OF POLISH SETTLERS HAD A DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN COLONIES.

4. ACCORDING TO LEGEND, THE FIRST POLE TO REACH AMERICA WAS JAN OF KOLN IN THE YEAR 1476, 16 YEARS BEFORE COLUMBUS' HISTORIC JOURNEY. IN SERVICE OF THE DANISH KING, HE ALLEGEDLY SAILED ALONG THE COAST OF NORTH AMERICA BUT PERISHED ON THE RETURN TRIP. HIS ADVENTURE WILL PRESUMABLY NEVER BE VERIFIED. THE FIRST CONFIRMED ARRIVAL OF POLES IN THE NEW WORLD WAS IN 1608, WHEN A HANDFUL OF CRAFTSMEN ARRIVED AT JAMESTOWN, THE FIRST PERMANENT SETTLEMENT IN AMERICA, WHICH HAD BEEN FOUNDED JUST ONE YEAR EARLIER. CAPTAIN JOHN SMITH, THE COLONY'S LEADER, PRAISED THE TALENT AND INDUSTRY OF THE POLISH SETTLERS, WHOSE PRODUCTS WERE EXPORTED TO ENGLAND AND GREATLY STRENGTHENED JAMESTOWN'S ECONOMY.

5. AS THE REMAINING COLONIES WERE ESTABLISHED ALONG THE ATLANTIC COAST, POLES OFTEN OCCUPIED IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND CULTURAL LIFE. CAPTAIN MARIC KRYGIER WAS THE MAYOR OF NEW AMSTERDAM (LATER NEW YORK) DURING THE 17TH CENTURY. ALEXANDER KAROL KURCJUSZ WAS FOUNDER OF THE SAME CITY'S FIRST HIGHER SCHOOL. JOHN RUTKOWSKI AND CASIMIR BUTKIEWICZ WERE AMONG NEW AMSTERDAM'S MOST DISTINGUISHED TEACHERS. WOJCIECH ADAMKIEWICZ WAS A CRAFTSMAN RESPONSIBLE FOR CONSTRUCTION OF MANY HOMES IN THAT SAME AREA DURING THE 17TH CENTURY. A MEMBER OF A PROMINENT COLONIAL FAMILY, JAN ANTONI SADOWSKI,

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WAS A FAMOUS FRONTIERSMAN WHO EXPLORED WILDERNESS AREAS IN WHAT IS NOW OHIO AND KENTUCKY AND OPENED TRADE LINKS WITH INDIAN TRIBES. HE ESTABLISHED THE EARLIEST SETTLEMENT AT WHAT IS NOW THE OHIO INDUSTRIAL CENTER OF SANDUSKY.

6. DURING THE PRE-REVOLUTIONARY ERA, POLAND ITSELF MAINTAINED A LIMITED TRADE RELATIONSHIP

WITH THE AMERICAN COLONIES. TOBACCO FROM VIRGINIA WAS IMPORTED BY POLAND. POLISH POTASH, CORN, AND WHEAT OCCASIONALLY WERE EXPORTED TO THE NEW WORLD.

7. THE OUTBREAK OF THE AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AROUSED SUBSTANTIAL INTEREST IN POLAND, INCLUDING THAT OF THE POLISH KING, STANISLAW PONIATOWSKI. A PROMINENT AIDE IN THE POLISH COURT AT THAT TIME WAS AN ENGLISHMAN CHARLES LEE, WHO LATER WENT TO SERVE THE AMERICAN CAUSE. CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LEE AND THE POLISH MONARCH GAVE CONCRETE EVIDENCE OF OFFICIAL POLISH SYMPATHY FOR AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE, DESPITE THE ABSENCE OF FORMAL SUPPORT TO THE COLONISTS. IN AN INDIRECT WAY, HOWEVER, POLAND'S INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS INFLUENCED THE SUCCESSFUL AMERICAN STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE. ABSORBED IN THE COMPLEX MANEUVERING FOR PRIMACY AFTER THE FIRST PARTITION OF POLAND. IN 1772, THE RUSSIAN AND PRUSSIAN DYNASTIES WERE PROBABLY LESS INTERESTED IN ASSISTING THEIR FELLOW SOVEREIGN IN GREAT BRITAIN AND HIS SUPPRESSION OF COLONIAL REBELLION IN THE NEW WORLD.

8. KOSCIUSZKO AND PULASKI WERE ONLY TWO AMONG MANY POLES WHO ACTUALLY FOUGHT ON THE AMERICAN SIDE. HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS SUGGEST BETWEEN 100 AND 150. IN AN ARMY OF 400,000, THIS WAS NOT A LARGE REPRESENTATION, BUT THEIR IMPACT FAR EXCEEDED THE MODEST NUMBER. HISTORIANS ALSO BELIEVE THAT MANY POLISH IMMIGRANTS, WHOSE FAMILY NAMES HAD BEEN CHANGED, SERVED IN THE CONTINENTAL ARMY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON. IN ADDITION, POLISH SOLDIERS AND UNCLASSIFIED

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OFFICERS WERE IN THE RANKS OF FRENCH ARMY UNITS DISPATCHED TO ASSIST THE AMERICAN EFFORT. AMONG THE MOST FAMOUS POLES IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION WERE MICHAEL KOWACZ (KILLED AT CHARLESTON IN 1779), JAN ZIELINSKI, AND FRYDERYK PASCHKE, WHO LATER WAS A FOUNDER OF THE CELEBRATED VETERANS ORGANIZATION, THE SOCIETY OF CINCINNATUS. ANOTHER FAMOUS POLISH OFFICER IN THE PULASKI LEGION, KAROL LITOMSKI, RETURNED TO POLAND WITH KOSCIUSZKO AND THEN CAME BACK TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1831.

9. PERHAPS THE POLE OF THAT PERIOD WITH THE GREATEST IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES WAS NOT A SOLDIER BUT A BUSINESSMAN, PIOTR STADNICKI. ASSOCIATED WITH FINANCIAL INTERESTS IN HOLLAND, STADNICKI

CKI WAS DESCRIBED BY THOMAS JEFFERSON AS "OUR MAIN BANKER IN EUROPE." HE WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN SECURING LOANS FROM EUROPEAN BANKS TO SUPPORT THE FLEDGING AMERICAN REPUBLIC. ANOTHER BANKER OF POLISH ORIGIN, HAYM SALOMON, ALSO SUPPLIED LOANS TO THE NEWLY INDEPENDENT UNITED STATES DURING THE DIFFICULT YEARS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

10 THE GREAT WAVE OF POLISH EMIGRATION, OF COURSE, DID NOT BEGIN UNTIL THE 19TH CENTURY. BUT THE TALENTS, COURAGE, AND DEDICATION OF POLES ALREADY HAD BEEN AMPLY DEMONSTRATED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AMERICAN NATION. THE PRINCIPLES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION EVOKED, IN PARTICULAR, STRONG SYMPATHY AND RESPONSE AMONG POLES IN AMERICA AND IN POLAND ITSELF. AS PULASKI TOLD BENJAMIN FRANKLIN IN PARIS, "WHEREVER ON THE GLOBE MEN ARE FIGHTING FOR LIBERTY, IT IS AS IF IT WERE OUR OWN AFFAIR." END ARTICLE.

11. REQUEST AGENCY IPS OR IOR/SKRZYPEK VERIFY POLISH NAMES AND FACTS CITED ABOVE.
DAVIES

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975WARSAW02372
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750140-0765
From: WARSAW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750426/aaaaayum.tel
Line Count: 192
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 24 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <24 NOV 2003 by ReddocGW>; APPROVED <30 DEC 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRANKLIN/JEFFERSON EXHIBIT FOLLOWING IS ENGLISH TEXT OF LOCALLY ORIGINATED RELEASE
TAGS: SCUL, OEXC, PL
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006